



Path to CGFNS Certification:

Applicant Handbook



Commission on
Graduates of
Foreign
Nursing Schools

Edition 30

Table of Contents

Introduction to CGFNS Certification	2
What This Book Contains	2
The Three-Part CGFNS Certification Program	3
Chart 1: Overview of the <i>Path to CGFNS Certification</i>	3
You Complete an Application Form	4
Chart 2: Checklist for Avoiding Common Application Problems	7
You Prepare and Send a Nursing Education Form	7
You Prepare and Send a Verification of Registration/License Form	8
CGFNS Opens Your File and Sends You an Identification Number	8
Chart 3: Application Documents Checklist	8
The CGFNS Credentials Review to Determine Eligibility for CGFNS Certification	9
Are You a First-Level, General Nurse?	9
Do You Meet the Educational Requirements?	9
Do You Have Appropriate Registration Documents?	9
Falsified or Altered Documents	10
CGFNS Notifies Eligible and Ineligible Applicants	10
Your Exam Date and Location	10
Changing Exam Date or Location, Your Name or Address	11
Cancellation of Application	11
Eligible Applicants	11
Ineligible Applicants	12
You Register for an English Proficiency Exam	12
You Prepare for CGFNS Qualifying Exam and English Proficiency Exams	13
Review Nursing	13
The <i>Official CGFNS Study Guide for the CGFNS Qualifying Exam</i>	13
Understand Multiple-Choice Testing	13
Review English	13
You Take the CGFNS Qualifying Exam and an English Proficiency Exam	14
Preparing for the CGFNS Qualifying Exam	14
At the Exam Center	14
The Exam Schedule	14
Inappropriate Activities	15
CGFNS Tells You the Results	15
What Happens When You Pass	15
What Happens If You Do Not Pass	16
Re-Scoring of Exams	16
Deciding to Re-Apply to CGFNS	16
Guidelines for Communicating with CGFNS	16
World Wide Web	16
Authorization to Release Information Form	16
Letters	16
Telephone Calls	17
Fax	17
In the Event of Natural Disaster	17
Other CGFNS Certification Program Services	17
Forwarding Nursing Education Information	17
Verification of Certificate Status	17
Replacement Certificates	18
Record Retention	18
Authorization to Release Information Form	19
Chart 4: Communication Guidelines	21

Introduction to CGFNS Certification

Every year, thousands of nurses from around the world decide that they would like to practice as registered nurses in the United States (U.S.). If you are one of them, the Commission on Graduates of Foreign Nursing Schools (CGFNS), and the CGFNS Certification Program (CP), can help you work toward your goal. The Certification Program is a three-part program designed specifically for **first-level, general nurses educated outside the United States** who are eligible to practice as registered nurses in the United States. It includes:

- Education and license review;
- Qualifying Exam of nursing knowledge;
- English language proficiency examination.

In order to be eligible for a CGFNS Certificate you must meet the educational and licensure credentials criteria and pass the two exams. The CGFNS Certificate helps you in three ways:

First, the certificate will help you to meet state requirements for a registered nurse (RN) licensing exam. Most states require a CGFNS Certificate from nurses who have been educated outside the United States before they can take the National Council Licensure Examination for RNs (NCLEX-RN® *examination*). Because each state and US territory licenses nurses separately the requirements may differ from state to state. You must contact the board of nursing in the state where you plan to work in order to learn how to become a licensed, registered nurse in that state.

Second, passing the CGFNS Qualifying Exam portion of the Certification Program will help you and your State Board of Nursing to be reasonably assured of your success on the NCLEX-RN. This is because the CGFNS Qualifying Exam is modeled after the NCLEX-RN. Passing the CGFNS Qualifying Exam does not guarantee that you will pass the NCLEX-RN, but CGFNS Certificate holders consistently have a higher rate of success on the NCLEX-RN than nurses educated outside the U.S. who do not have CGFNS Certificates.

Third, the certificate will help you to qualify for an occupational visa. CGFNS was named in Section 343 of the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act (IIRIRA) of 1996 as an organization qualified to administer a screening program for healthcare professionals who seek an occupational visa. The International Commission on Healthcare Professions (ICHP)™, a division of CGFNS, has developed *VisaScreen™: Visa Credentials Assessment* to meet the requirements of Section 343. For foreign-educated nurses who do not hold a U.S. license, passing a predictor exam, such as the CGFNS Qualifying Exam, is a requirement of Section 343.

What This Book Contains

1. Instructions to complete the application.
2. Instructions pertaining to the *Charts and Forms*, which include:
 - Current CGFNS Fees;
 - Credit Card Payment Form;
 - CGFNS Exam Locations and Important Dates;
 - Application for the CGFNS Certification Program;
 - CGFNS Photo Identification Card;
 - Nursing Education Form: Certification Program; and
 - Request for Validation of Registration/License Forms.
 - Authorization To Release Information Form.
3. Information on the Certification Program and process.
4. Information about other CGFNS services.
5. Guidelines for communicating with CGFNS.

The *Path to CGFNS Certification* describes how to apply for and earn a CGFNS Certificate. There are many steps, some to be taken by you and some to be taken by CGFNS (see Chart 1). **Please read this entire booklet before completing any of the application forms.** The detailed description of each step will help you to understand the complete program.

Please note: All applications are processed by CGFNS at its headquarters in Philadelphia, PA, USA. If you have any questions or concerns as you proceed through the CGFNS Certification Program, please contact the CGFNS Customer Service Department. Refer to pages 21 for guidelines on communicating with CGFNS. For additional information on CGFNS and its services, please visit our website at www.cgfns.org.

The Three-Part CGFNS Certification Program

All three parts must be completed successfully.

Part One - Credentials Review

CGFNS certifies that you are a first-level, general nurse (as defined historically by the International Council of Nurses) by evaluating your education and registration.

Part Two - Qualifying Exam of Nursing Knowledge

The Qualifying Exam is a one-day test of your nursing knowledge. It is a paper and pencil exam that is given in two parts. Part One in the morning and Part Two in the afternoon.

Part Three - An English Language Proficiency Examination: TOEFL, TOEIC, or the Academic Module of IELTS

An English language proficiency examination is taken to determine your proficiency in the English language. The Department of Health and Human Services and CGFNS have determined that English language proficiency is a critical part of safe nursing practice and have approved the following examinations:

- Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL)
- Test of English for International Communicators (TOEIC)
- International English Language Testing System (IELTS)

See page 12 for contact information.

For an applicant to be exempt from the English proficiency requirement for the CP program, they must meet *ALL* of the following criteria:

- native language is English;
- country of nursing education was in Canada (except Quebec), the United Kingdom, Ireland, Australia or New Zealand, South Africa, Trinidad and Tobago;
- language of instruction was English; and
- language of texts was English.

If a CGFNS Certification Program applicant does not meet *ALL* of these criteria, they are not exempt from the English examination requirement.

Please Note: You must pass all three parts of the Certification Program in order to earn the CGFNS Certificate.

Chart 1: Overview of the *Path to CGFNS Certification*

Actions You Take	Actions CGFNS Takes
You complete an Application Form with complete fee, and you prepare and send Request for Validation of Registration/License Forms to your a) licensing authority in your country of nursing education, and b) licensing authority(ies) where you are currently registered/licensed.	
You prepare and send a Nursing Education Form to your school.	CGFNS sends you an identification number and CGFNS <i>Official Study Guide</i> .
	CGFNS reviews your eligibility.
You register with the examining institution for the English proficiency exam.	CGFNS notifies eligible and ineligible applicants of status.
Request English proficiency exam results be forwarded to CGFNS.	CGFNS notifies eligible applicants of date and location of exam.
You prepare for the CGFNS Qualifying Exam and English proficiency exam.	
You take the CGFNS Qualifying Exam and English proficiency exam.	CGFNS notifies you of Qualifying Exam results.

You Complete an Application Form

The **Application for the CGFNS Certification Program** can be found in the Certification Program Applications Packet or obtained on-line at www.cgfns.org. You can also apply on-line at www.cgfns.org. The application form contains items that should be completed by you. Each item is very important. In order to help speed the processing of your application, fill in the form exactly as the instructions indicate. **You cause a delay if you do not follow the instructions or sign your application** because you will be asked to re-submit an entirely new Application Form. Please type or print clearly in ink when you fill in this form. Every item must be filled in according to the following instructions and the form properly signed and dated.

Items 1 and 2.

To avoid duplicate files be sure to include your CGFNS/ICHP ID number. If you don't know your ID number be sure to list your full name under which other services were applied for. Keep in mind that the way you list your name on the application will be the way it appears on the Certification Program Certificate.

Item 3. Other Names

Please supply all names you have used in the past. This is necessary because CGFNS must be able to recognize all your documents, no matter what form of your name appears on them. Any variation of your name should be printed in this space. **This would include your birth name as well as different spellings, informal variations, abbreviations and different orders of your name.** Include with your application any legal documentation or notarized affidavit(s) verifying your name change. For instance, if married, a marriage certificate or notarized affidavit should be attached. If you need additional space, list your names on a separate sheet of paper.

Item 4. Address

List the address where you want to receive all mail from CGFNS.

Items 5, 6, 7, 8, 9.

These items are self-explanatory. When providing dates, use the month/day/year format.

Item 10. Pre-Nursing Education

List the primary, intermediate and secondary schools you attended, the countries in which the schools were located, and the dates you enrolled in, and completed. Also, include a clear photocopy of your senior secondary school diploma or external examination certificate. In many instances, if it has been more than ten years since you completed your secondary school education this requirement may be waived.

- **Diploma not in English**

If your diploma or certificate is not in English, you also must attach a word-for-word English translation, not a summary. The following sentence, referred to as a **“Certification of Accuracy,”** must be typed or written at the end of the translation and must be signed by the translator. It does not need to be notarized.

Certification Of Accuracy

“This is to certify that this is a true and correct English translation of the attached photocopy of the original (name of document) of (your name).”

- **Unable to Obtain a Copy**

If you are not able to obtain a copy of your **diploma**, you may request your senior secondary school to send a letter directly to CGFNS, confirming your dates of attendance and date of graduation. If you are not able to obtain a copy of your certificate that was awarded based on the **results of an external exam** (for example, GCE, GCSE, Irish Leaving Certificate, WAEC), you may request that the examining board send directly to CGFNS a letter certifying the grade(s) earned on the examination(s).

Letters submitted by a senior secondary school or examining board must be written on official stationery, be signed by a school principal, headmaster or an examining board official, and contain the school's or examining board's stamp or seal. If the letter is not in English, remember to include a word-for-word translation with a Certification of Accuracy signed by the translator.

- **Form V**

Applicants educated in countries where completion of “Form V” is considered completion of senior secondary school may submit one of the following documents as verification:

- statement of completion of “Form V” issued by the headmaster or school principal;
- official secondary school transcript showing completion of “Form V”; or
- external examination results.

Items 11

List the nursing title obtained in your country as it appears on the Registration using English characters. CGFNS can only accept the completed Nursing Educational Form and transcripts from the authorized issuing body.

Items 12

If you answer yes, you will need to contact the Ministry of Education or Health or licensing agency in your country for information on obtaining your records.

Items 13

These items are self-explanatory.

Item 14. Nursing Registration (Initial and Current)

Be sure to answer both questions. **CGFNS will not accept nursing examination results as proof of nursing registration/licensure.** You must complete the Request for Validation of Registration/License Forms and send those forms to **each** of the following:

- your original nursing registration from the jurisdiction (the legal authority) in the country where you received your general nursing education; and
- all current general nursing registration(s) or documentation of lifetime registration. Licenses issued in countries with lifetime registrations must be validated every three years. If your nursing diploma authorizes practice in your country, of the issuing body (nursing school, Ministry of Health, etc.) must complete both the Nursing Education Form and the Nursing Registration Form. This is to verify that your authority to practice is valid and not restricted, suspended or revoked.
 - In the event that you run out of Request for Validation of Registration/ License Forms, CGFNS will accept an original letter verifying your registration status, if it is sent directly to CGFNS from the registration authority in the jurisdiction where you are registered, and it contains all of the information requested on the Request for Validation of Registration/License Forms. This letter must be on official stationery, signed by the registration official and sealed with an official seal. Because of the importance of verifying the authenticity of your registration, **a photocopy of this letter will not be accepted.**

Item 14b asks for information regarding your registration/license, and whether it has ever been revoked, suspended or restricted. Be sure to answer this question for all registrations/licenses that you hold now or have held in the past. **Failure to answer both questions in Item 14 will result in a delay.**

Deadlines

The “deadline” is the last day that CGFNS can receive (in Philadelphia, PA, USA) your completed **Application Form, Nursing Education Form and transcripts, License Validation Form, secondary school document and payment in full**, and still have time to approve your application to schedule you for the exam of your choice. **If CGFNS receives any of these application materials after the deadline for your first choice of exam date, you will not be eligible for that choice.** However, you will be automatically considered for the other exam date you selected or for the next available exam. (For a description of a complete application, see Chart 3, page 8.) Remember, in addition to delays caused by the mail, the complexities of working with foreign documents means it can take as long as three months to completely review an application for an exam. Still, CGFNS makes every effort to review your application for the CGFNS Qualifying Exam as quickly as possible.

Item 15. Nursing Exam Locations and Dates

To complete Item 15, you will need to refer to the chart, **CGFNS Nursing Exam Locations and Important Dates**, included in the Certification Program Applications Packet. Choose two exam dates and two exam locations. The chart lists the Exam Center Number you will need to complete Item 15. It also indicates the specific Exam Centers open for each of the exam dates in a given year. Every effort will be made to schedule your upon approval for your first choice. If your first choice is not available you will be scheduled for your second choice. A test center may not remain open for a particular exam due to insufficient numbers of applicants for that center or an unstable political environment. Please note the application deadlines for each exam listed on the chart and choose your exam date and location thoughtfully. Failure to appear for the exam, or request for change of date or location before the change deadline date (10 weeks before the exam date) will result in a forfeiture of the application fee. In order to take the exam at a later date you will need to re-apply and pay the re-application fee.

Item 16. Special Needs

If you have a disability, special testing arrangements will be considered, at no extra cost, as long as you make your request on the Application Form (Item 16) and include a letter from an appropriate medical professional confirming your diagnosis. This letter must be signed by a medical professional and describe the accommodations that need to be made for your disability or those that have been provided in the past by your school or other testing organizations.

Item 17. Photographs and Photo Identification Card

CGFNS requires you to send three, passport-sized photographs. Each must be recent, clear and **signed on the front and back**. After you have signed them:

- attach one photo to the **Application for the CGFNS Certification Program** in the outlined box. Attach it so that your face is clearly visible.
- attach the second photo to the **Photo Identification Card** included in the Certification Program Applications Packet. Fill in the Photo Identification Card according to the instructions on the card and send it with your other CGFNS application documents.
- enclose the third photo in the envelope with your other application documents.

Item 18. Application Fee

The Application fee can be paid by:

- Credit card payment — CGFNS accepts Visa, MasterCard and Discovery/Novus (CGFNS does not accept American Express)
- International money orders or certified bank checks made payable to “CGFNS”.
- On-line when you complete your application at www.cgfns.org

Personal checks are not accepted.

Do not send cash in the mail.

All fees must be paid in U.S. dollars drawn on a U.S. bank.

The full application fee must be paid before your application and file will be reviewed. Please be advised that any money submitted to CGFNS/ICHP will first be applied to any unpaid balance from previously ordered products or services before new orders are processed.

The fee covers the expense of processing your application, reviewing your credentials, and preparing, administering and scoring your exam. If your credentials do not show that you are an eligible candidate for the CGFNS exam, a portion of the fee will be refunded (see **Current CGFNS Fees** included in the Certification Program Applications Packet).

A returned check fee of \$50.00 will be charged for all checks returned due to insufficient funds or invalid account. A \$50.00 fee will be charged for an inappropriate credit card transaction.

Item 19. Attestation

The attestation in Item 19 creates a contract between you and CGFNS. It explains the terms under which CGFNS will review your application. After reading it carefully, sign and date the form. Certify that all documents which have been submitted to CGFNS for any purpose have not been falsified, altered or tampered with by any person. CGFNS and others will rely on this application and on the documents and information submitted, and if any of it is falsified, altered or tampered with, or if you alter a CGFNS Certificate or a CGFNS Report or misrepresent a copy as an original, CGFNS may take such disciplinary action against you as it deems appropriate including bar you from future examinations or from participation in any CGFNS programs. The consequences could adversely affect your professional license, immigration status, employment and other matters.

Signature

Sign the Application Form exactly as you have indicated your name in Item 2 of the application. You will be required to use the same signature each time you correspond with CGFNS or CGFNS asks for your signature. If you earn a CGFNS Certificate, it will be issued using the name provided on your application. The Application Form does not need to be notarized.

Mailing Your Application

After completing your Application Form, send it to CGFNS, along with a photocopy of your secondary school diploma or external exam certificate, the Photo Identification Card, your passport-sized photos and all required fees. Send your application materials to the following address:

CGFNS
Attn: CP Application
3600 Market Street, Suite 400
Philadelphia, PA 19104-2651 USA

Chart 2: Checklist for Avoiding Application Form Problems

Check Each Item Below to Ensure that You Avoid Common Application Problems

Before signing and mailing your application, check to see that:

- there is a response to every item;
- you have included, in Item 3, every form of your name that appears on your application documents, and any necessary proof of your other names;
- you have attached a readable photocopy of your pre-nursing education documentation, or had an official letter sent to CGFNS by your school or had proof of external exam results sent to CGFNS by the examining board (see page 4);
- you have completed the enclosed Request for Validation of Registration/License Forms and sent them to the appropriate licensing authorities (see page 5);
- you have completed and forwarded the enclosed Nursing Education Form and request for transcripts to your school of nursing (see page 7);
- every document is either in English or has a word-for-word English translation attached that includes a **Certification of Accuracy**, signed by the translator (see page 4);
- your three photos are recent, clear, passport-sized pictures (see page 6);
- you have **signed the three photographs** on the front and back and attached them to the appropriate forms (see page 6.); and
- you have included the appropriate exam fee.

You Prepare and Send a Nursing Education Form

To give CGFNS the necessary information about your nursing education, it is very important for you to complete Section I (“To the Applicant”) of the **Nursing Education Form** included in the Certification Program Application Packet. Section II is to be completed by your school of nursing. Like the other application materials, the Nursing Education Form and educational transcripts must arrive at CGFNS before the application deadline. Avoid delay by giving the form to your nursing school early and by informing the school about the deadline. It is a good idea to contact the school a week after you send your form to them and ask about its status.

Please Note: You complete only Section I, then send the form to your school with a request that the school complete Section II and return it directly to CGFNS.

Section I

Complete items 1-10. Consistency among all your forms is very important so refer to your completed **Application for the CGFNS Certification Program** when completing this section of the form.

Section II

When you ask your school to fill in Section II, make sure the school understands that it is important to complete all the questions about the number of hours of theoretical instruction and number of hours of clinical practice. An incomplete Nursing Education Form will result in delays in processing your application. Please request that your school respond promptly and send the completed form and transcripts directly to CGFNS by first-class airmail. Explain that CGFNS will not review your application until your Nursing Education Form and transcripts/full academic records arrives.

- Only Nursing Education Forms and academic records/transcripts submitted to CGFNS directly by your school will be processed. **Forms and transcripts submitted by you, even if in a sealed envelope from the school, cannot be accepted, and you will be asked to have a new form and transcripts submitted directly by your school.**
- If you attended more than one nursing school, including a school of midwifery, photocopy both sections of the Nursing Education Form after you have filled out Section I. Send the copies to each school you attended, asking that Section II be completed. Some schools charge a small fee for completing the form or for the costs associated with providing a word-for-word English translation of any of your academic records/ transcripts. Ask about your school’s policy.
- You must have your school send official copies of your complete academic records/transcript(s) along with the Nursing Education Form. Having full academic records/transcript(s) on file benefits you if CGFNS has questions about how your Nursing Education Form was completed.
- If your academic records are not in English, you must have the issuing authority provide a certified translation. The following sentence, referred to as a **“Certification of Accuracy,”** must be typed or written at the end of the translation and must be signed by the translator. It does not need to be notarized.

Certification Of Accuracy

“This is to certify that this is a true and correct English translation of the attached photocopy of the original (name of document) of (your name).”

Additional Services:

If CGFNS has your full academic records/transcripts on file, we will forward these records along with your Nursing Education Form to other institutions when you request and pay for the service (see “Forwarding Nursing Education Information” on page 17).

You Prepare and Send a Request for Validation of Registration/License Form

To give CGFNS the necessary information about your nursing license, it is very important for you to complete the front portion of the **Request for Validation of Registration/License for Certification Program** form included in the Certification Program Application Packet. The Section titled “For Registration Authority Use Only” is to be completed by your licensing agency.

Like the other application materials, the Validation of Registration/License for Certification Program form must arrive at CGFNS before the application deadline. Avoid delay by giving the form to your licensing agency early and by informing the agency about the deadline. It is a good idea to contact the agency a week after you send your form to them and ask about its’ status.

CGFNS Opens Your File and Sends You an Identification Number

Two to four weeks after CGFNS receives either the Application Form or the Nursing Education Form and educational transcripts, CGFNS will create a special file for your application materials. Once CGFNS has received your Application Form, you will be mailed a permanent Identification Number (CGFNS ID Number). CGFNS uses this important number to locate your file and application materials. The CGFNS ID number also allows you to establish an on-line account that will provide access to your file to check the status. **Use this ID number, your full name, and your birth date every time you contact CGFNS.**

Your CGFNS ID Number is for record-keeping purposes only. It does not mean that CGFNS has received all of your documents or that you are eligible for the CGFNS Qualifying Exam. It only means that CGFNS has received the first of your application documents. **Remember, no applicant can be scheduled for the CGFNS Qualifying Exam until all application materials are received and have been reviewed** (see Chart 3 for a checklist of documents CGFNS must receive prior to determining your eligibility for the CGFNS Qualifying Exam).

Chart 3: Application Documents Checklist

For an Eligibility Review, CGFNS Must Receive
1. The completed and signed Application for the CGFNS Certification Program .
2. The completed Photo Identification Card , including a photograph.
3. Two additional photographs (one attached to the Application Form).
4. Documentation of your senior secondary school education with word-for-word English translations, including a Certification of Accuracy .
5. Documentation of your original and current nursing registrations/licenses directly from the appropriate licensing authorities.
6. The completed Nursing Education Form and transcripts from your school of nursing.
7. Credit card payment or an international money order or certified bank check for the full application fee in U.S. dollars, drawn on a U.S. bank, payable to “CGFNS.”

CGFNS will not return any of the documents that are part of your complete application. Remember to send only readable photocopies, not originals, of the documents CGFNS requests directly from you.

The CGFNS Credentials Review Procedure to Determine Eligibility for CGFNS Certification

In reviewing your eligibility for the Certification Program, CGFNS staff members give personal attention to each application. They make decisions based on CGFNS' most current knowledge of nursing education and registration/licensure around the world. To ensure that all applicants are treated fairly, CGFNS reserves the right to re-evaluate any application at any point in the future if we receive information about a jurisdiction's nursing education and registration requirements.

When CGFNS staff members review your documents to determine your eligibility for the CGFNS Certification Program, they ask the following questions:

Are You a First-Level, General Nurse?

You must be educated and hold both initial and current registration/licensure as a “first-level, general” nurse as defined historically by the International Council of Nurses.

- A **first-level nurse** is called a registered or a professional nurse in most countries. A **second-level** nurse may be called an enrolled, a vocational, a practical nurse or a nurse assistant. Second-level nurses are not eligible to be licensed as registered nurses in the U.S. and, therefore, are not eligible to take the CGFNS Qualifying Exam.
- A **general** nurse studied theory and had clinical practice in a variety of nursing areas. A nurse who specialized in one area without being educated and registered/licensed as a general nurse (for instance, midwife, pediatric nurse or psychiatric nurse) is not eligible to take the CGFNS Qualifying Exam. **Physicians and other healthcare or allied health professionals who have not completed an approved nursing school are not eligible to take the CGFNS Qualifying Exam.**

Do You Meet the Educational Requirements?

CGFNS requires evidence that you have:

- successfully completed a senior secondary school education that is separate from your nursing education;
- graduated from a government-approved, general nursing program of at least two years in length; and
- received theory and clinical education in each of the following: nursing care of the adult (which includes medical and surgical nursing), maternal/infant nursing, nursing care of children and psychiatric/mental health nursing.
 - If you graduated from a government-approved, general nursing program, but have not had theory and clinical practice in one of the areas of nursing listed above, you may be able to meet the CGFNS requirement by passing a nursing course in the missing area. The course must be offered by a government-approved school of nursing and must contain both theory and clinical practice in the same course. Non-academic work experience and in-service education do not meet CGFNS' education requirement for eligibility.
 - If you have not completed a senior secondary school education that is separate from your nursing education, you can meet the CGFNS pre-professional education requirement by obtaining a General Education Development (GED) Diploma, an equivalency diploma recognized in the United States. For information contact:

GED Testing Service
American Council on Education
One Dupont Circle N.W., Suite 250
Washington, D.C. 20036 USA
Telephone: (202) 939-9490

Do You Have Appropriate Registration Documents?

Your registration authorities must provide CGFNS with evidence of the following:

- initial registration as a first-level, general nurse in the country where you completed your general nursing education; and
- current, first-level, general nurse registration.

If CGFNS has questions about your documents, the respective registration/licensing authority may be asked to clarify materials or provide additional documentation so that the review of your application can continue.

If your country does not issue a license, and your nursing diploma authorizes you to practice, you must still forward the Validation of License Form to the issuing authority and request they validate your diploma to ensure there has been no revocation, suspension or restriction to practice.

Falsified or Altered Documents

If CGFNS finds that your documents have been altered in any way, or information contained in your application is false, you will not be permitted to take the CGFNS Qualifying Exam. This includes all documents and application materials submitted by you, or on your behalf by another person. Therefore, before anything is sent to CGFNS, make certain that none of the material has been falsified or altered in any way. Submission of falsified or altered documents will result in your file being closed, forfeiture of your entire application fee and ineligibility for future CGFNS/ICHP services.

CGFNS Notifies Eligible and Ineligible Applicants

Once you are scheduled “(rostered)” to take the CGFNS exam, your date and exam location will be posted on the CGFNS web site, www.cgfns.org. You must check your schedule and eligibility information on our web site.

It will no longer be necessary for you to wait for your admission permit to arrive in the mail, or to present your admission permit to CGFNS staff on the day of the exam. You must go to the web site and look up your information. If you wish, you may print out a copy of your exam schedule information, to keep for your records. We strongly suggest you print a copy as confirmation of your schedule.

To access your exam schedule (“roster”) information, you must:

- Go to the official CGFNS web site, www.cgfns.org
- On the first web page, locate the link “ON-LINE EXAM SCHEDULE INFORMATION,” and click on this link
- In the new window, enter your permanent CGFNS identification number
- In the “Select CGFNS CP Exam Date” drop-down box, select an exam date
- Click on the button labeled “SUBMIT”

Your exam schedule information will be displayed. you may print this page for your records.

If you are not scheduled (“rostered”) for that exam, you will be advised.

On the day of the exam, you will simply need to go to the location of your exam at the appointed time. You must take at least one (1) form of official, government-issued photo identification (such as your passport) with you to the exam location. You will not be admitted to the exam without proper identification.

Examples of acceptable identification:

- Passport
- Professional Regulation Commission ID card
- Nursing license (if it contains your photograph)
- United States state driver’s license (not an International Drivers Permit)

Your Exam Date and Location

CGFNS can usually schedule you for your first choice of exam date and location. If, however, your first choice of location is full by the time you have been found eligible, CGFNS will automatically schedule you for your second location choice. If you did not indicate a second choice of location on your application, you will usually be scheduled for the next exam to be given at your first choice of location. If the CGFNS Exam Center you choose is no longer operating, CGFNS will inform you of your choices for a different exam date or location. CGFNS posts all ID numbers that are scheduled for the upcoming exam on its’ website at www.cgfns.org. Time and location of the exam center is also found on this site.

Applicant files undergo the Eligibility Review in the order in which they are found to be complete. Therefore, send all of your documents to CGFNS as early as possible before a deadline date.

Please note: CGFNS reserves the right to close any center in its sole judgment, including without limitation, when hostilities pose a threat to applicants and/or center management staff. CGFNS will not be responsible for any expense, loss or damage resulting from

an applicant attending a test venue, and each applicant's rostering will constitute a release of CGFNS from any liability therefor, including without limitation, any personal injury or death. Although we desire and intend to remain open in all test sites around the world, please be advised that it may become necessary to close one or more sites on short notice as the situation dictates. For the latest up to date information on any test site closing, log onto the CGFNS website, www.cgfns.org. Click on the "News and Events" and then "What's New" options.

Changing Exam Date or Location, Your Name or Address

Should you need to change your scheduled Exam Center or exam date, or if you have changed your legal name, CGFNS can make the change in your application file as long as we receive your written request, signed or on-line (not e-mail), **no later than 10 weeks before the exam you requested**. E-mail requests for change of date, location, or name and address will not be accepted at any time. Requests to change your mailing address also must be in writing or on-line, but can be made at any time. In your letter requesting any of these changes, remember to include your CGFNS ID Number and birth date.

Cancellation of Application

CGFNS will withdraw your **Application for the Certification Program** at any time, but we must receive your cancellation request in writing. Include your CGFNS ID Number and birth date in the letter. You will receive an acknowledgment and possibly a refund of a portion of your application fee. The refund amount depends on the total amount CGFNS has received from you or on your behalf, and the total outstanding charges on your account. In addition, if you have been scheduled for an exam and wish to cancel, your request must be received at least 10 weeks before the exam to be eligible for a partial refund. If you cancel your application less than 10 weeks before your scheduled exam, you will not be eligible for any refund.

If you determine that you need a service instead of the CGFNS Certification Program you will be allowed to transfer the amount already paid, less a small administration fee, to the new service. Additional information for the new service may be required from the educational program or licensing agency. This will cause a delay in the process.

You must:

- cancel the CGFNS Certificate Program application;
- apply for the new service; and
- provide a written and signed request that the remaining funds be transferred to the new service. No e-mail messages will be accepted.

Please be advised that any money submitted to CGFNS/ICHP will first be applied to any unpaid balance from previously ordered products or services before new orders are processed. Applications will not be reviewed or processed until the total fee has been received by CGFNS.

If a refund is appropriate, CGFNS/ICHP will issue refunds in the following manner:

- 1) If payment was made by credit card, refunds will be issued against the credit card that was originally charged. If, for any reason, the refund transaction is denied by the credit card company, a check for the refund amount will be issued directly to the applicant at the applicant's current address on file.
- 2) If payment was made by check, refunds will be issued directly to the applicant at the applicant's current address on file.
- 3) If more than one form of payment is used to pay for a service, CGFNS reserves the right to issue the entire refund to only one of the payment forms.
- 4) Payments made on behalf of the applicant by third parties will have refunds issued directly to the applicant at the applicant's current address on file.

Eligible Applicants

If you qualify to take the CGFNS Qualifying Exam, you will receive a letter of approval from CGFNS. If you have received this letter but do not appear as rostered on the CGFNS web site, call or fax CGFNS immediately. When you contact CGFNS, include your CGFNS ID number and a return phone number or fax number.

Ineligible Applicants

If, after review of your credentials, CGFNS finds that you are not eligible either for the CGFNS Qualifying Exam or to receive the certificate, you will receive a letter explaining the reasons. It is not unusual for applicants to be declared ineligible for the exam. In many cases, applicants may become eligible for the exam with further education.

If you have been declared ineligible, a portion of your application fee will be refunded, if you so request. CGFNS will keep a part of your application fee to cover the cost of processing your application and reviewing your credentials. Whether you send the fee yourself, or if the fee was paid to CGFNS by someone else, the refund check will be issued directly to the applicant at the address on file. Payments made by credit card will automatically be credited back to the cardholder.

You Register for an English Proficiency Examination

Applicants applying to the CGFNS Certification Program must pass an English language proficiency examination. You may be exempt from the English language proficiency requirement if you meet all of the following criteria:

- Native language is English
- Country of nursing education was Australia, Canada (except Quebec), Ireland, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, South Africa, Trinidad and Tobago
- Language of instruction was English
- Language of textbooks was English

If you do not meet all of the above criteria, you are required to take and pass an approved English language proficiency examination. Currently, you may select from the following three English proficiency examinations to take as part of the Certification Program:

1. **Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL)**, administered by the Educational Testing Service (ETS). *Passing Score: 540 (paper/pencil version) or 207 (computerized version)*
2. **Test of English for International Communication (TOEIC)**, administered by ETS. *Passing Score: 725*
3. **International English Language Testing System (IELTS)**, administered by the Cambridge ESOL Examinations, the British Council and IDP Education Australia. *Passing Score: 6.5 Overall (Academic Module)*

You must pass both the CGFNS Qualifying Exam and one of the above-mentioned English proficiency exams within a two-year period. Either test may be taken first. All English language proficiency scores are valid for up to two years from the date of administration. In addition, **all Exam scores must be forwarded to CGFNS by the administering body**; CGFNS will not accept an official score report submitted by the applicant or any third party. You must request that your test scores be sent to CGFNS.

You must apply directly with one of the following examining bodies in order to take any of the above-mentioned English exams. To obtain information on these exams, a list of test sites and dates and an application form for the relevant exam, contact:

TOEFL

Educational Testing Service (ETS)
PO Box 6151
Princeton, NJ 08541-6151
Tel: (609) 771-7100
Website: www.ets.org

TOEIC

Educational Testing Service (ETS)
Rosedale Road, MS 10-P
Princeton, NJ 08541
Telephone: (609) 734-1540
Fax: (609) 734-1560
Email: toeic@ets.org
Website: www.toeic.com

IELTS

Cambridge Examinations and
IELTS International
100 East Corson St., Ste 200
Pasadena, CA 91103
Tel: (626) 564-2954
Email: ielts@ceii.org
Website: www.ielts.org

If registering for the TOEFL, please be sure to reference code number **9988** on your application form. This number is extremely important since it identifies you specifically as a CGFNS candidate and ensures that your TOEFL results will be forwarded for inclusion into your CGFNS file. If registering for the TOEIC or IELTS, be sure you request that your scores be sent to CGFNS.

You Prepare for the CGFNS Qualifying Exam and English Language Proficiency Exams

CGFNS contracts with national organizations highly respected and accredited in the fields of education and test development to prepare the CGFNS Qualifying Exam in accordance with guidelines set by standardized testing experts. The exam tests material similar to that on the U.S. registered nurse licensing exam, the NCLEX-RN® examination.

Review Nursing

Since each exam that CGFNS gives is a new test version, the best way to prepare for the nursing exam is to review what you learned in your basic nursing education program. Study textbooks in nursing care of the adult (medical and surgical nursing), maternal/infant nursing, nursing care of children and psychiatric/mental health nursing. You also can benefit from reviewing the nursing process and patient needs as taught in the United States (see below for information on the *Official Study Guide for the CGFNS Qualifying Exam* to help you prepare for the exam).

The Official Study Guide for the CGFNS Qualifying Exam

CGFNS has developed a study guide to help you understand multiple-choice questions and identify your strengths and weaknesses in nursing knowledge. This guide is not a substitute for basic education or an in-depth review of nursing textbooks. Using it does not guarantee a passing result on the CGFNS Qualifying Exam. The sample questions used in this guide were once actual exam questions but will not appear on the exam you will be taking. The Official CGFNS Study Guide includes:

- sample nursing questions with explanations of the answers;
- complete examples of CGFNS Qualifying Exams with sample answer sheets and rationales for both correct and incorrect answers;
- chapter on how to understand multiple-choice questions;
- reading list for all areas of nursing in the exam; and
- description of the way nursing is practiced in the United States.

The Official CGFNS Study Guide will automatically be sent to you upon receipt of your application and full payment. For additional study aides, use the CGFNS StoreFront Order Form or log onto the CGFNS website at www.cgfns.org.

Understand Multiple-Choice Testing

The CGFNS Qualifying Exam is a “multiple-choice” test. This means you will choose a correct answer to each question from among four possible choices printed in the test booklet, and then mark your selection on an answer sheet (see Figures 1 and 2). You will not write answers in your own words.

In the exam, the multiple-choice questions generally start by describing a patient, some symptoms and some of the treatments and nursing care the patient will receive. This description contains all the information you need to choose the correct answer to the accompanying question.

Sample Question

Edna Morton, 60 years old, has just been told that she has diabetes mellitus. The physician has prescribed an oral hypoglycemic agent, tolbutamide (Orinase). When teaching Mrs. Morton about her diet, the nurse should emphasize which of these aspects?

Possible Answers

- A. Eating most meals at home.
- B. Eliminating desserts except fruit.
- C. Being aware of the availability of special diabetic foods.
- D. Maintaining a regular meal schedule.

Figure 1: An example of a multiple-choice nursing question such as those found on the CGFNS exam.

Sample Answer Sheet

1 A B C D
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

2 A B C D
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

3 A B C D
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Figure 2: In a multiple-choice test, you fill in a blank circle on an answer sheet to indicate which answer you believe is correct.

Review English

To help you become familiar with the types of questions on the English proficiency exam, CGFNS has included English language practice questions in its *Official Study Guide* (see page 13). English study materials also may be obtained directly from the examining body. You may also purchase English language practice audio tapes from CGFNS.

You Take the CGFNS Qualifying Exam and English Proficiency Exam

Arrangements to take the English proficiency exam must be made directly with the appropriate examining body (see page 12). The CGFNS Qualifying Exam takes a full day, beginning early morning and ending late afternoon. Please plan your travel accordingly. If you need a visa to travel to the Exam Center, apply to the proper authority early enough to have your papers prior to your departure for the exam. The following paragraphs describe some procedures that are followed to ensure that you take the exam in a calm, secure environment that will be comfortable for you.

Preparing for the CGFNS Qualifying Exam

1. Do not delay your study preparation until you have received confirmation of test.
2. Make your exam location requests wisely recognizing possible visa or travel limitations you may experience.
3. CGFNS does not operate, license, endorse, or recommend any training, review, online courses, schools, or study materials that claim to prepare applicants for the CGFNS Qualifying Exam.

At the Exam Center

Plan to arrive at your Exam Center at the time your Exam Permit indicates. If you are late, regardless of the reason, you will not be admitted to the exam. By not admitting latecomers, we avoid disrupting the exam in progress and give everyone the same amount of time to take the exam.

Family and friends are not permitted in the exam room, nor are books, papers, cameras, calculators, tape recorders, cellular phones or pagers. Wear comfortable clothes and do not bring valuable items or large amounts of money to the exam. You will be given two special pencils to use, but you should bring your own eraser and pencil sharpener. You also may bring your lunch, so you can be sure you will be back from the lunch break in time. You will not be allowed to eat or drink while the exam is in session.

When you arrive, CGFNS exam staff will ask you to sign your name on a register. Bring a passport and official government-issued identification that includes your photograph.

In the exam room, please follow exactly the instructions that CGFNS staff members give you. The exam personnel and you must follow certain rules about seating arrangements and behavior during the exam. For example, staff will assign you a seat that you may not change; a staff member must accompany you if you have to leave the room; and you may not talk during the exam. No exceptions will be made to the rules. During the exam, CGFNS staff members observe all of the test takers to make sure everyone follows these instructions.

Only applicants who are officially scheduled by the authority of the CGFNS Headquarters are authorized to take the exam. Scores obtained and applications submitted by unscheduled individuals will be invalid, null and void. Re-application for a future exam and the corresponding fee will need to be submitted.

The Exam Schedule

The exam schedule includes morning and afternoon sessions, plus a lunch break. The day will begin with morning registration, followed by Part I of the nursing exam, which contains 150 questions. Then there will be a lunch break and afternoon registration, followed by Part II of the exam which contains 110 questions.

Before each part of the exam, a CGFNS staff member will give you an exam booklet containing instructions and questions. The instructions will be read aloud in English, while you read silently. The CGFNS exam supervisor will tell you when to begin working on the exam and when you must stop.

If you are unsure of an answer, it is better for you to guess than not to answer at all. However, if you mark more than one response to any question, that question will automatically be scored as incorrect. Mark your answers directly on the answer sheet, not in the exam booklets. Be sure you mark your answer sheet firmly so that your responses are clear when the exam is scored.

Inappropriate Activities

Because the CGFNS Qualifying Exam is designed to measure your nursing knowledge, no one may give or receive help during the exam. Inappropriate help includes getting assistance from anyone other than a CGFNS staff person, helping another test taker, referring to other printed material or working on an inappropriate section of the exam. Anyone who gives or receives such help will be asked to leave the room. That person's answer sheets will not be scored. The event will be recorded and reported to CGFNS, and the person may be barred from taking any future CGFNS Qualifying Exams.

If you see anyone not following the rules and instructions, or if you observe a disturbance of any kind during the exam, please report this to the CGFNS exam supervisor at the time it occurs or before you leave the Exam Center. You may also communicate your experience in writing to the following address:

CGFNS
ATTN: Test Services
3600 Market Street, Suite 400
Philadelphia, PA 19104-2651
USA

All allegations related to inappropriate activities are taken seriously by CGFNS and will be investigated to ensure the integrity and validity of the exam.

CGFNS Tells You the Results

Eight to 10 weeks after you take the CGFNS Qualifying Exam, CGFNS will send you a letter telling you whether you passed or failed the exam. In addition to your pass/fail status, the results letter will provide your numerical score and the passing score for the examination.

The letter also will include a diagnostic profile with an analysis and description of four subject areas, designated **Client Needs Categories**. The four Client Needs Categories are: Safe, Effective Care Environment; Health Promotion and Maintenance; Psychosocial Integrity; and Physiological Integrity. Since these four categories form the basis not only of the CGFNS Qualifying Exam but also of the NCLEX-RN, knowledge of your performance in these areas will help to prepare you for the U.S. licensure examination.

Mail delivery varies from country to country, so please allow up to four additional weeks for your results letter to arrive by mail. The letter is sent directly to you at the address on file. Results will be sent to only this address. These policies are in place to help protect the confidentiality of your results. Included with the letter are the materials and information you will need to take the next steps toward your goal.

What Happens When You Pass

When you pass the credentials review, the CGFNS Qualifying Exam, and the English proficiency exam, you will receive your CGFNS Certificate.

Annual statistical reviews conducted by CGFNS show that CGFNS Certificate holders consistently have a higher rate of success on the NCLEX-RN than nurses educated outside the United States who do not hold certificates. You can further improve your chances of passing the NCLEX-RN by continuing to review your nursing textbooks after you have earned your CGFNS Certificate. Also, it is to your benefit to take the NCLEX-RN soon after earning your CGFNS Certificate. The longer you wait to take the NCLEX-RN, the greater the chance that the overall test plan of the NCLEX-RN will differ from that of your CGFNS Qualifying Exam.

What Happens If You Do Not Pass

Applicants who fail the credentials review, the CGFNS Qualifying Exam or the English proficiency exam do not receive a CGFNS Certificate. If you fail one or both of the exams, you can re-apply to take the failed exam again.

Please Note: Both the CGFNS Qualifying Exam and the English proficiency exam must be taken and passed within a two-year time frame.

Re-Scoring of Exams

The CGFNS Qualifying Exam is scored by computer because this is the most reliable way for multiple-choice tests to be scored. After the exams have been computer-scored, any exam answer sheets with unusual results are hand-scored to further ensure reliability. However, if you have failed the exam and feel that another hand-scoring of your answer sheet would be useful, you may request it. **CGFNS will re-score an exam as long as it is no more than two years old.**

To request this service, write to CGFNS, indicating the date of the exam you wish to have re-scored. Also include your CGFNS ID Number, your birth date and documentation of any name change since you took the exam to be re-scored. Sign the letter, enclose the proper fee, address the envelope to CGFNS, and mark it “**ATTN: Re-Score.**”

Deciding to Re-Apply to CGFNS

When deciding whether or not to re-take the CGFNS Qualifying Exam, you should consider the experience of others. Analysis by CGFNS shows that applicants who fail the CGFNS exam are likely to have difficulty passing it when they re-take it. Our analysis shows that the more times a person takes the CGFNS exam before passing it, the less likely that person is to pass the U.S. registered nurse licensing exam, the NCLEX-RN. CGFNS does not limit the number of times you may re-take the exam, but you should remember the factors described here when making the decision to re-apply.

Guidelines for Communicating with CGFNS

Earning a CGFNS Certificate takes time, has multiple steps and usually happens over long distances. This means that communication between you and CGFNS is particularly important. If you have questions about your application, necessary documents or scores, you must first go on-line to check the status of these items. To register on-line you must use your full name and birthdate or CGFNS ID number. If this information is inconsistent with what you believe to be true, you may contact CGFNS via letter, telephone call or fax. We offer the following guidelines to make this communication easier (see Chart 4 on page 21 for additional information).

World Wide Web

You may access the CGFNS website for information on CGFNS and its programs, services and activities, application forms, and the On-line Application System at www.cgfns.org.

Authorization to Release information Form

If you would like a third party to be able to access information from your confidential files, you will need to complete an Authorization to Release information form and return the completed form to CGFNS. CGFNS will not release information to anyone other than the applicant without an Authorization form. This authority may be revoked in writing at any time. Forms are available on CGFNS's website at www.cgfns.org or on page 19 of this Handbook.

Letters

CGFNS treats your application as confidential, to be discussed only with you. Your right to confidentiality is most easily protected if you ask questions by letter. When you send a letter, it must be written and signed only by you. When you write to us, always include your CGFNS ID Number, full name, and birth date. When sending letters to CGFNS, find out what delivery options are available to you. CGFNS recommends that you send all correspondence by first-class airmail, and that you consider other faster mailing options when time is short.

Telephone Calls

CGFNS will provide information regarding applicant status via telephone **to applicants only**. CGFNS will not release information to a third party. If you wish to telephone CGFNS, call our Customer Service Department at (215) 349-8767. To save time, have your CGFNS ID Number ready. Please note that if you are requesting the results of a CGFNS service, additional information will be asked of you in order to verify your identity. If the Customer Service Representative is unable to adequately verify your identity, results information will not be released via the telephone.

Phone lines are generally open between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. Monday through Thursday, and 9 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. on Friday, Eastern Time. The phone lines are not open evenings, weekends or on U.S. holidays. After hours, you may access information by Integrated Voice System at (215) 599-6200. In an effort to keep our costs to you at a minimum, CGFNS will not accept collect telephone calls.

Fax

CGFNS has a dedicated applicant facsimile (fax) lines for its services. You may correspond via fax to CGFNS at (215) 349-0026 or (215) 662-0425. Do not fax documents to CGFNS. Faxed documents can not be authenticated.

Please Note: Application documents and all other documents requiring applicant signatures that are faxed to CGFNS MUST be followed by the original of the document, mailed to CGFNS within five business days.

In the Event of Natural Disaster

CGFNS makes every effort to ensure that our communication with applicants is clear and timely. However, some events are out of our control. For example, events such as natural disasters, political unrest and postal strikes may occasionally affect the application process. CGFNS cannot be responsible for delays caused by such conditions, but we will make every reasonable effort to notify you of any alternate arrangements.

If, due to circumstances beyond our control, we are unable to review your application in time for the exam date of your choice, we will review the application for the next exam date.

Other CGFNS Certification Program Services

To request any of the CGFNS services listed below, please go to www.cgfns.org to order the service. If you do not have access to the website you may write to the CGFNS Customer Service Department, and include your name, CGFNS ID Number and birth date. Be sure to sign the letter and enclose proper payment, if payment is required. You will find the cost of each service on the chart, **Current CGFNS Fees**, included in the Certification Program Applications Packet. You may also request any of these services on our website at www.cgfns.org.

Forwarding Nursing Education Information

Even before you earn a CGFNS Certificate, you may want CGFNS to mail a copy of the **Nursing Education Form** and educational transcripts, which is part of your CGFNS application, to a U.S. licensing board or school. We cannot send the documents to you, but we will mail photocopies directly to a licensing board or school. This service also includes sending copies of your academic records/transcript(s), if CGFNS has them on file. To request this service, write to us, including the name and full address of the licensing board or school to which we should send your information. If the name on your application form differs from the name in your letter of request, include a copy of a marriage certificate or notarized affidavit documenting the name change. Sign your request. Enclose the proper fee, address the envelope to CGFNS, and mark it “**ATTN: Nursing Education Request.**”

Verification of Certificate Status

Verification of your status as a certificate holder may be requested when you complete an application for a visa to enter the United States to work as a nurse. Also, most U.S. state boards of nursing will ask you for verification when you apply for a license to practice as a registered nurse in that state or territory. CGFNS will send a letter verifying your status as a certificate holder to any individual or organization you designate. To request this service, write to CGFNS, listing the name and full address of the individual or organization who should receive the letter of verification. If your name has changed since you received your certificate, enclose a notarized affidavit or copy of a marriage certificate as proof of the change. Sign your request. Address the envelope to CGFNS, and mark it “**ATTN: Verification Request.**” There is no fee required for this service.

Replacement Certificates

CGFNS does not re-issue a duplicate certificate. However, if your CGFNS certificate is lost or destroyed, CGFNS can send you an official letter verifying the date of your certification. To order this service, write to CGFNS stating your request and include your CGFNS ID Number, your birth date, and documentation of any name change since you received your certificate. It is also important that you sign the letter. Enclose the appropriate fee, address the envelope to CGFNS, and mark it **“ATTN: Replacement Certificate.”** Under no circumstances will CGFNS issue a duplicate certificate if you change your name.

Record Retention

CGFNS will destroy inactive applicant files according to the following guidelines:

- **Two-Year Destruction**

If a CGFNS file has been created for an applicant based solely upon receipt of academic record information and/or school transcripts but an application for a CGFNS program is not received within two calendar years from the date of file creation, the file will be destroyed at that time.

- **Seven-Year Destruction**

If a file has been created for an applicant based upon receipt of academic record information and/or school transcripts and an application for a CGFNS program, that file will be held for a period of seven years after the last activity has occurred within that file.

If CGFNS has not received any documents for two years after application, you will be notified that your file will expire unless you request otherwise. If your file is expired you will be required to submit initial application and fee to resume the service.



AUTHORIZATION TO RELEASE INFORMATION



NOTICE: By signing below: (1) you will allow CGFNS/ICHP to disclose confidential, personal, private information about you and your file at CGFNS/ICHP to the person designated below; (2) you will give up the right to receive duplicate information from CGFNS/ICHP; and (3) you release and indemnify CGFNS/ICHP, its members, trustees, officers and employees from any liability for losses, damages or claims of any type arising out of actions taken by CGFNS/ICHP in reliance upon this Authorization.

This authorization will remain valid for two years from the date written below (or if none, from the date this authorization is received by CGFNS/ICHP).

You may revoke this Authorization in writing at any time which will be effective on and after the 30th day after CGFNS/ICHP receives your written revocation by regular mail or courier at its headquarters office in Philadelphia, PA USA—faxed, electronic mail, voice mail or oral revocations will not be effective under any circumstances.

AUTHORIZATION: I authorize CGFNS/ICHP to release to the below-named Authorized Recipient any and all information about me and my application/order for services from CGFNS/ICHP, including without limitation, the status of my application/order, the results of any credentials review, examination or test, and any other information in or relating to my file at CGFNS/ICHP.

CGFNS/ICHP ID No. _____ (if known)

Date of Birth: _____ (M/D/YR)

Sign name as it appears

On your Application/Order: _____

Print name: _____

Date: _____ (M/D/YR)

AUTHORIZED AGENT:

Print Name: _____

Print Address: _____

(All materials
will be sent to
this address only)

Contact person: _____

Telephone: Day: _____ Fax number: _____

Evening: _____ E-mail: _____

DETACH HERE

Chart 4: Communication Guidelines

Information Needed	Who Can Ask For It	How To Ask	Special Tips
I wish to obtain copies of the <i>Path to CGFNS Certification: Applicant Handbook</i> .	Anyone can request one for you.	Write, fax, email, telephone or download from the web site.	An individual can receive 5 books free of charge by mail. If ordering additional copies, the per-book-fee (and any shipping costs) must be pre-paid.
I want to confirm that my application documents have been received by CGFNS, or that I have been scheduled for an exam.	Only you or your authorized agent.	Write, telephone, or visit the On-Line Application System at www.cgfns.org .	Include your CGFNS ID Number and birth date in writing to CGFNS.
I have a question about a letter I received from CGFNS.	Only you or your authorized agent.	Write or telephone.	We advise you to write for this kind of information. If you must telephone, have your CGFNS ID Number available.
I need to notify CGFNS of a legal name change or change my address, test date, or test location.	Only you	Write or make changes on-line at www.cgfns.org via the On-Line Application System.	Changes must be made 8-10 weeks before the date on which your Exam is scheduled. If sending your request by mail, sign your request and include your CGFNS ID Number and birth date.
I wish to cancel/withdraw my application for the CGFNS Qualifying Exam and Certification Program.	Only you.	Write or fax.	Include your CGFNS ID Number and date of birth in your letter. You will receive an acknowledgement and, if applicable, a refund of a portion of your Application fee.
I want to order a study aide or other item.	Anyone can order one for you.	Write, download the form from the web site or order on-line.	Give the name and address for delivery of the books and enclose the appropriate fee.
I need to tell CGFNS that my on-line roster information doesn't match my initial notification letter scheduling me for an exam.	Only you or your authorized agent.	Telephone or fax.	State the problem. Include a return phone or fax number along with your CGFNS ID Number, name and birth date.
I need to tell CGFNS that I am not listed on the on-line roster.	Only you or your authorized agent.	Write, telephone or fax.	Before you contact CGFNS remember: 1. You will be rostered only after you received a letter saying you have been scheduled for the CGFNS Exam. 2. Paper Permits are not sent with the notification letter. 3. State the problem. Include a return fax number, your CGFNS ID Number, name, and birth date.
I want CGFNS to send verification of my certificate status.	Only you.	Write or request on-line at www.cgfns.org via the On-Line Application System.	State the request and to whom the letter should be sent. Include your CGFNS ID number, birth date, signature, and proof of name change (if applicable).
I want CGFNS to mail a copy of my nursing education information to a school or U.S. board of nursing.	Only you.	Write or request on-line at www.cgfns.org via the On-Line Application System.	State the request and to whom the letter should be sent. Include your CGFNS ID number, birth date, signature, and proof of name change (if applicable) and fee.



Commission on
Graduates of
Foreign
Nursing Schools

3600 Market Street, Suite 400, Philadelphia, PA 19104-2651, USA

Applicant Information: (215) 349-8767

Website: <http://www.cgfns.org>